Measuring fairly with informal units

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A sample from this topic. The complete topic collection contains three different resources and worked solutions.

Show your thinking using words, working or a labelled drawing. Use the explanations and example first.

What you will practise

- Measuring fairly with informal units
- Explain and check an answer with an appropriate representation.

Useful starting skills: Use objects, drawings or a number line to explain a simple idea.

An informal unit is an everyday item used repeatedly to measure, such as a block for length or a cup for capacity. All copies of the unit must match.

Line up units without gaps or overlaps. A smaller unit can give a more precise measurement. Always name the attribute and the unit when you report a result.

Worked example

A ribbon covers 7 equal blocks and a strip covers 4. Compare their lengths.

Check that both use the same blocks with no gaps.

Subtract 4 from 7 to find the difference.

Answer: The ribbon is 3 blocks longer.

Try it yourself

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. A pencil is 5 identical blocks long and a ribbon is 8 of the same blocks long. Which is longer and by how much?

2. Why should measuring blocks touch end-to-end?

Answers and explanations

Check the method as well as the final answer. An alternative correct method is also valid.

1. Ribbon; 3 blocks

Use the same unit for both; 8-5=3.

2. To avoid gaps or overlaps

A gap adds unmeasured space; an overlap counts some length twice.

Curriculum reference: VC2M1M01; VC2M1M02

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